Anglorum" [= *puffinus*], and "*Sterna Trudeaui*"; and excludes "*Procellaria pelagica*" and "*Sterna macroura* [= *paradisæa*] because no specimens are found in the Lawrence collection and there are no recent records. There are no less than three valid records for *H. nævius* near New York City, and neither of the reasons just given seems sufficient to exclude a species once recorded, nor do they explain other omissions. It is inconsistent to exclude, for instance, *Tringa alpina* or *Æstrelata hæsitata* by the 50-mile limit rule and then admit *Chen cærulescens* and *Anas crecca*.

As a whole, however, the list is refreshingly accurate. The English name given to *Acanthis linaria rostrata* on page 57 should be Greater Red-poll, but there are no other slips of the pen worthy of notice.

A new and pleasing feature is found in the habitats given for each species, and they are defined with unusual care. Still, in numerous instances they are carelessly expressed. "Breeds from Pennsylvania northward," for instance, is not a habitat. Many of the birds of the Canadian avifauna are correctly stated to breed southward along the Alleghany Mountains, but the following species have been omitted, viz.: *Sphyrapicus varius*, *Contopus borealis*, *Empidonax flaviventris*, *Spinus pinus*, *Sciurus noveboracensis*, *Sylvania canadensis* and *Certhia familiaris americana*. Some of them have been recorded as far south as North Carolina, years ago.

Turning for a moment to the introduction we find classified groups of birds that are not happily chosen. The distinctions are artificial, rarity usurping largely the place of a scientific basis. For instance, the "irregular transient visitants" might readily fall into other groups and the awkward term used thus become superfluous. More than this, why the Sooty Tern and the Oyster-catcher are grouped apart from the White Ibis and the Black-necked Stilt is not obvious on any basis.

However, there is so much of value in this important contribution, that we can well close our eyes to its comparatively unimportant defects.—J. D., Jr.

Ridgway on New Birds from the Galapagos Islands.[1]—In a preliminary paper of fourteen pages Mr. Ridgway has given us some of the results of his studies of the large collection of birds made at the Galapagos Islands by Dr. G. Baur and the late Mr. C. F. Adams in 1891. Says Mr. Ridgway: "Many of the specimens having been obtained on islands never before visited by a collector, it is to be expected that novelties would be found among the rich material which it has been my privilege to study. . . . Perhaps the most interesting result of Messrs. Baur and Adams' explora-

[1] Descriptions of Twenty-two New Species of Birds from the Galapagos Islands. By Robert Ridgway. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XVII, 1894, pp. 357–370, No. 1007.

tions is the discovery of species which absolutely bridge the previously existing gap between the so-called genera *Geospiza* and *Cactornis*. . . . This matter will be fully discussed and illustrated in a much more detailed paper which will be published as soon as practicable." Of the twenty-two new species here described, three are referred to the genus *Nesomimus*, five to the genus *Certhidea*, seven to *Geospiza*, four to *Camarhynchus*, and three to *Pyrocephalus*. There are also remarks on "*Geospiza assimilis* (Gould?)" and *Pyrocephalus dubius* Gould, to which *P. minimus* Ridgw. is here referred.

Mr. Ridgway has also described[1] *Zosterops aldabrensis* from Aldabra Island, *Z. madagascariensis gloriosæ* from Gloriosa Island, *Cinnyris aldabrensis* from Aldabra Island, *C. abbotti* from Assumption Island, *Centropus insularis* from Aldabra and Assumption Islands, and *Caprimulgus aldabrensis* from Aldabra Island.—J. A. A.

Lucas on the Affinities of the Cœrebidæ.[2]—Mr. Lucas's paper is a collection of fragmentary though valuable notes, illustrated with figures of the palatal region, tongue, pterylosis, and intestines in quite a number of passerine birds, rather than a formal treatise. It opens with some suggestive observations concerning the difficulties that surround the investigator in attempting to elucidate the relationships of various puzzling genera among the Passeres. He says: "Representatives of the Mniotiltidæ, Meliphagidæ, Drepanidæ, Tanagridæ, and Fringillidæ, have been examined in the hope that the affinities of the Cœrebidæ might be made apparent; and I am compelled to confess that, on the whole, the result has been unsatisfactory, and that the examination of a considerable number of specimens has rather lessened my hopes that anatomical, and especially osteological, characters may be relied upon to show relationship among the passeres. Of course," he continues, "one trouble lies in the fact that the so-called families of passeres, at least very many of them, are not families at all, or not the equivalents of the families of other groups of vertebrates. It is my belief that any group of vertebrates to be of family rank should be capable of skeletal diagnosis, and this test applied to the passeres reduces them to a family or two, as has been done by Huxley and Fürbringer." While this may be true as regards the facts in the case, we cannot quite share Mr. Lucas's belief that among such a compact and numerously represented group as the higher Passeres it is essential to have an osteological basis for 'family' groups. A great deal depends upon the

[1] Descriptions of Some New Birds from Aldabra, Assumption, and Gloriosa Islands, collected by Dr. W. L. Abbott. By Robert Ridgway. *Ibid.*, pp. 371–373.

[2] Notes on the Anatomy and Affinities of the Cœrebidæ and other American Birds. By Frederick A. Lucas. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XVII, 1894, pp. 299–312.